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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the various types of correspondence used in the job search process and provides guidelines and samples of each type. Types of letters discussed include cover letters (including letters of application and prospecting letters), networking letters, thank-you letters, acceptance letters, withdrawal letters, and rejection of offer letters. Some "do's" and "don't's" also are listed. (KC)

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JOB SEARCH CORRESPONDENCE

Corresponding with employers is a crucial component of the job search. Employers can draw conclusions about your professionalism, competence, and personality by the appearance, content, and quality of your letters. You will be called upon to produce various types of correspondence; those used most often are described below.

COVER LETTERS

Cover letters are job search letters that accompany resumes and are targeted to a specific position or organization. There are a variety of cover letters which can be used, two of the most common are the letter of application and the prospecting letter.

Basic Guidelines

- All letters should be individually produced (**NEVER SEND A FORM LETTER**) on the same color and quality of paper and in the same type style as the resume. A 20 pound paper in ivory, buff, grey, or white is preferred.

- Letters should contain three to four paragraphs and never exceed one page in length.

- Components should include:

Return address	Body
Date	Complimentary closing
Address	Signature
Salutation	Enclosure line

- Format should be block or modified block style.

- If letters are produced on a word processor, use a letter-quality or laser printer. If a typewriter is used, make certain that the copy is legible and professional in appearance. Dot matrix printing is not considered appropriate.

- Address your letter to the person responsible for hiring decisions. It is appropriate to call the organization and ask for this information.

- If it is not possible to obtain a name and title, letters should be addressed to **"Dear Sir or Madam"** or **"Dear Personnel Director,"** etc.

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

- Women should be addressed as **"Ms."** unless you know that **"Mrs."** or **"Miss"** is preferred.

- Letters and resumes can be folded and forwarded in a business sized envelope which matches the resume; however, mailing them unfolded in a 9" x 12" white envelope is sometimes preferable.

- GRAMMAR, SPELLING, and PUNCTUATION must be correct. Have letters proofread for errors. **THESE ARE KNOCK OUT FACTORS** which can eliminate you from further consideration.

MODEL COVER LETTER

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date

(Space down four spaces)

Mr./Ms. Recruiter's Full Name
Recruiter's Title
Department Name
Company Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name Only,

The opening paragraph should state why you are writing and why you are interested in the organization. If you are writing a letter of application, you should name the specific position for which you are applying. Also, tell the employer how you became aware of the vacancy. If you were referred to the employer by a career counselor, a former employer, or someone else, this is the best place to mention that person's name and to point out that he or she suggested you write. A letter of inquiry should provide evidence of your career-mindedness; it helps to refer to specific job functions, if not titles, when trying to determine if a vacancy exists.

The middle paragraph is where you draw attention to your resume and highlight specific skills relevant to the potential employer. Present your motives for seeking employment with this organization and cite achievements and qualifications related to the position desired. If you have qualifications that are not noted on your resume, this is your opportunity to discuss them.

The closing paragraph states what you will do next (such as calling to arrange an interview at the employer's convenience) or what you would like the recipient of the letter to do next. An assertive statement explaining what you plan to do and what you hope the employer will do is harder to ignore than a vague request for consideration.

Sincerely,

(your signature here)

Your Name Typed

Enclosure (This indicates that your resume and/or additional materials are enclosed)

APPLICATION LETTER - serves as a business transmittal for your resume and is used when applying for a specific position. It should:

- introduce your credentials to the employer.
- demonstrate that your qualifications match those of the position.
- generate employer interest and action.
- **RESULT IN AN INTERVIEW.**

With these goals in mind your letter must:

- address the needs of the employer. Tailor your letter content to the requirements listed for the position. **WRITE TO THE AD.**
- express ideas thoughtfully and precisely in well organized paragraphs which contain action statements and cite accomplishments.
- call for action by indicating your interest in meeting to discuss your qualifications.

BLOCK FORMAT

231 Van Buren Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46308
April 3, 1992

Ms. Susan Parker
Director
Community Services
918 South Madison Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46512

Dear Ms. Parker:

In response to your recent advertisement in the Indianapolis Star, I am writing to apply for the position of Community Services Coordinator. Due to the strong appeal this position has for me, I am submitting my credentials for your review.

As a resident of the Indianapolis area, I have long been aware of the many professional services provided by your agency and of the fine reputation you enjoy. I feel that my interest in working with the elderly, along with my skills and motivation, would allow me to make a valuable contribution to your organization.

As indicated in my resume, I will graduate from Indiana State University in May with a bachelors degree in Sociology. In addition to my academic training, my work as an intern and as a volunteer in social service settings has given me an understanding and concern for the social issues in our community; additional work experiences have given me excellent communication skills and developed my attention to detail.

I welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss my qualifications. I will call your office during the week of April 9 to arrange a mutually convenient appointment. I can be reached at (317) 426-8901. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Grey

Enclosure

PROSPECTING LETTER - serves as a letter of inquiry to determine if there are current or anticipated openings within an organization or to indicate an interest in the organization and inquire about positions for which you would qualify. Although the first paragraph will be more general in nature, the basic structure should be targeted and follow the same guidelines as the letter of application.

MODIFIED BLOCK FORMAT

820 N. Brown St.
Terre Haute, IN 47803
March 3, 1993

Mr. Edwin Jamison
Director of Personnel
MSD of Center Township
711 S. Main St.
Indianapolis, IN 47229

Dear Mr. Jamison:

Due to my plans for relocating in the Indianapolis area, I am writing to inquire about existing or anticipated openings with MSD of Center Township. The bachelors degree will be awarded to me in May of 1993 from Indiana State University where my major is Elementary Education and my minor Language Arts.

As you will note on my enclosed resume, I am currently student teaching in a sixth grade self-contained classroom where responsibilities include instructing in all areas of study. In addition, I have had the opportunity to work with students to develop a bi-weekly newsletter which announces school activities and highlights contributions made by students and teachers. This project has greatly improved the students' writing skills and will be continued next year.

I would appreciate the opportunity to apply with your corporation and will call your office on March 25 to discuss the steps involved in your application process. Should you need to contact me, I can be reached at (812) 357-2859. I will look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Melissa Stone

Enclosure

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

NETWORKING LETTER - serves to request career information, advice, or most importantly, an informational interview. The resume should <u>not</u> be sent with this letter, as the purpose is to gather information and not to seek a position.

3821 Longridge Drive
Alexandria, IN 42368
October 8, 1992

Ms. Christine Kennedy
Design Manager
Browne Engineering Inc.
1642 Winthrop Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46321

Dear Ms. Kennedy:

Sarah Smith suggested that I write you regarding my interest in the field of commercial design. She felt that your advice and counsel could be of great benefit as I attempt to make some important career decisions.

I am certain that I wish to pursue the area of commercial design but am uncertain as to the type and size of firms that I should target and the kind of entry-level position which would offer the most beneficial experience. I would appreciate hearing your views.

I will call the week of October 12 to see if we can arrange a brief meeting at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Pamela Jordan

THANK-YOU LETTER - serves to express gratitude and should be forwarded to anyone who offers consideration or assistance in the job search process. Letters should always be typewritten and should be mailed within 24 hours of the contact.

Thank-you letters should be sent in the following situations:

- after a job interview. If interviewing with more than one person, send a letter to each individual with whom you spent a significant amount of time.
- following an informational interview.
- following an extended phone conversation.
- after receiving a rejection.
- upon leaving a job.

2817 Elm Drive
Ft. Wayne, IN 45382
November 13, 1992

Mr. Brent Burke
Manager
Computer Systems, Inc.
P.O. Box 1208
Yorktown, VA 23671

Dear Mr. Burke:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the Personal Computer Coordinator position. I enjoyed meeting with you and your staff and was most impressed with the tour of your facility.

After our meeting I was even more enthusiastic about the prospect of working for your organization. I feel my education and training have prepared me well for the responsibilities of the coordinator position and that my goals are completely compatible with those of Computer Systems, Inc.

Thank you for arranging our meeting and for your time, hospitality, and consideration. I can be reached at (219) 276-3821 should you desire any additional information. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Paul Stuart

ACCEPTANCE LETTER - serves to accept a job offer and should state clearly the terms of employment such as job title, starting date, salary, etc. and should express your appreciation of the offer.

8631 Willow Farm Drive
Lexington, KY 67832
December 7, 1992

Ms. Amanda White
Promotions Coordinator
Wilson and Jones, Inc.
P.O. Box 6712
Columbus, OH 32167

Dear Ms. White:

I would like to confirm my acceptance of your offer for the position of Assistant Promotions Coordinator at a starting salary of $24,682. I will be able to assume responsibilities on January 17, 1993 as requested.

I look forward to my association with Wilson and Jones, Inc. and am most enthusiastic about becoming part of the promotions team.

I appreciate your confidence.

Sincerely,

Gina Douglas

WITHDRAWAL LETTER - serves to notify an employer that you do not desire further consideration. You should express your gratitude for the time and consideration given.

2387 Smith Rd.
Evansville, IN 48201
November 12, 1993

Mr. Chad Wilson, Manager
Wilson, Stephens & Roar
Certified Public Accountants
1800 Church Plaza
Evansville, IN 48201

Dear Mr. Wilson:

I am writing to withdraw my name from further consideration for the position of Staff Accountant. As we discussed in our interview, I have been exploring opportunities with an out-of-state firm and have, after careful deliberation, decided to accept their offer.

I want to thank you for your time and consideration and wish you and your staff well in future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Susan Chambers

REJECTION OF OFFER LETTER - serves to inform an organization that you have decided not to accept their offer of employment. You should indicate that you have given careful consideration to the offer and express appreciation.

8721 Brooke Court
Louisville, KY 49325
April 13, 1992

Ms. Stephanie Taylor
Manager, Sales and Marketing
Willis and Babcock
681 Executive Suite
Indianapolis, IN 46392

Dear Ms. Taylor:

I would like to express my appreciation for your offering me the position of Marketing Associate. However, after much consideration, I feel I must decline the offer.

I appreciate meeting with you and your staff. I was very impressed with the high level of professionalism in your organization. You really have a top notch team. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Hamilton

SOME DO'S

DO...

-analyze background, interests, and qualifications before targeting employers.
-research organizations prior to beginning letter writing campaign.
-make sure all correspondence is professional in content and appearance and is error free.
-draw attention to qualifications by using positive and confident statements.
-use action words and phrases.
-cite accomplishments giving precise examples wherever possible.
-include a phone number, with area code, where you can be reached in all application and prospecting letters.
-make answering machine messages professional.
-be aware that envelopes are also noticed by employers and should be addressed appropriately.
-indicate follow-up action: "I will call your office on October 11."
-make follow-up call on the date indicated in your letter.

SOME DON'TS

DON'T...

-hand write business correspondence.
-fax letters or resumes unless asked to do so.
-address letters: "To whom it may concern."
-use negative words or terminology which draw attention to weak areas.
-include salary history or expectations.
-end your letter with a passive closing statement: "I will look forward to hearing from you."
-fail to make a follow-up phone call.